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EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF BODIES ESTABLISHED PURSUANT TO THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS

Report of the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

Under section F "Public information", in the subsection entitled "comments by the Secretary-General", please replace paragraph 56 by the following three paragraphs renumbered 56, 56 bis and 56 ter.

"56. With respect to print materials issued by the Department of Public Information, DPI should be allowed a certain autonomy in the production of its print materials as these are not for the record. They are produced primarily to create awareness and understanding of the human rights work of the United Nations, including the work of the treaty bodies, and to generate media interest in covering it. Materials produced by DPI on the work of the treaty bodies, such as special press releases, normally feature articles or background material and highlight the meeting's main issues or recommendations. In this regard, the secretariat of the treaty body and DPI staff should cooperate to identify specific issues that might provide journalists with information on which they could base stories. Such information would have greater impact if it is communicated to the press in advance and not after the meeting has taken place. DPI press releases are useful to the media but are mainly produced for delegations, staff and others. At New York and Geneva, press conferences and media outreach to national, regional and international press are also an important aspect of promoting the work of the treaty bodies.

"56 bis. The Secretary-General notes the suggestion that a public information budget be made available to support grass-roots initiatives designed to disseminate information about the treaty bodies in culturally appropriate and more popular formats and media and agrees that the challenge

is in the implementation at the grass-roots level. A pro-active strategy, in promoting the work of the treaty bodies in the field is used by relevant United Nations Information Centres (UNICs) when the report of a State party is submitted to a treaty body. UNICs generate interest in the national media and in grass-roots organizations by disseminating information about the work of treaty bodies through briefings, press conferences, organization of interviews and meetings with grass-roots organizations.

"56 ter. Additional effort has been made in recent years to engage the attention of UNICs to promote the work of the treaty bodies. This includes, when the report of a State party comes before a treaty body, ensuring that the relevant UNIC receives a copy of the report, following up with press releases on specific meetings of the relevant treaty body and transmitting to the UNIC the concluding observations adopted on the report. The success of this strategy has depended on a number of factors. The first is the capacity of the UNIC to respond to the additional workload and the receptiveness of the local media to such information. A second factor is the relevance and interest of the proceedings in the treaty body. Another is the quality of the concluding observations. While the results have been mixed, in a number of instances, UNICs have been able to generate considerable local interest in the proceedings of treaty bodies relating to the countries in which they are situated.